

DPC Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 4

Wineries Flourishing in the Delta Region

Over the last five years, several Delta counties have adopted zoning code amendments and ordinances that have prompted the creation of wineries in their respective Delta agricultural areas. In July 1998, Sacramento County adopted an amendment to its zoning code, allowing wineries in agricultural zones; in July 2001 San Joaquin County adopted a similar ordinance allowing wineries and off-site wine cellars in agricultural zones.

Such ordinances have led to a substantial increase in the number of permit applications for wineries under consideration by County planning departments, particularly in Sacramento County, the first of the Delta counties to adopt the changes. While a winery use permit was granted to the Marks family on Andrus Island on the same date Sacramento County's ordinance was adopted, no other applications were considered until 2002, when four applications were submitted. Of those four, one has been approved (Gustafson Winery, January 2003), and three others are still pending (Grand Island Winery, Scribner Bend Vineyards, and Sea Nymph Vineyards).

In San Joaquin County, two winery use permits were issued before the new ordinance was passed (one to Sutter Home for a winery and sprayfields on Brack Tract, no public facilities, 1998; and one to CCRC Farms for expanded production in an existing winery on Mandeville Island, 2001). With the adoption of the ordinance, however, one might look for an increase in applications for Delta wineries in San Joaquin County similar to that seen in Sacramento County. Most of San Joaquin County's existing wineries are located just outside of the Delta, in the Lodi and Woodbridge areas.

Whereas Sacramento County is currently considering the largest number of new winery applications, Yolo County continues to have the largest number of existing Delta wineries, mostly located in the Clarksburg area.

If you're interested in finding out what the Delta has to offer in terms of local wines and products, plan an excursion to one or more of these Delta wineries and specialty shops, or simply place an order online:

Bogle Vineyards & Winery, 37783 County Road 144, Clarksburg. (916) 744-1139; www.boglewinery.com

River Grove Winery, 52183 Clarksburg Rd., Clarksburg. (916) 744-9000; www.rivergrovewinery.com

Wilson Vineyards, Clarksburg. *Tasting by appointment only.* (916) 744-1373; www.wilsonvineyards.com

Six Hands Winery, 13783 Isleton Rd., Walnut Grove. (916) 776-2053; www.sixhandswinery.com

Cellar's Market, 14114 Market St., Walnut Grove. *Specializing in the sale of Delta wines and specialty food products.* (916) 776-4255; www.cellarsmkt.com

Mark Your Calendars!

- **Delta Protection Commission** Thursday, March 27, 6:30 p.m.
- **DPC Recreation Citizens Advisory Committee** — Tuesday, March 25, 1-4 p.m.
- **DPC Agriculture Committee** Thursday, April 17, 2-4 p.m.
- **DPC Budget and Finance Committee** — Wednesday, April 30, 4-5 p.m.

All meetings are held at the Jean Harvie Community Center in Walnut Grove. Please call (916) 776-2290 if you need directions.

San Luis Drain Update

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation issued a San Luis Drainage Feature Re-evaluation Plan Formulation Report (PFR) in December 2002. This document was prepared pursuant to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals December 2000 order that the Department of Interior must provide drainage to the San Luis Unit of the Central Valley Project, and it meets the Plan of Action milestone for identifying a proposed action to provide this service by December 2002.

The report identifies four alternatives that will be further detailed in future environmental documentation on the project, and identifies one preferred alternative out of the four as the proposed action. One of the alternatives involves ocean drainage disposal, one involves in-Valley drainage disposal, and two involve disposal in Delta locations (Chippis Island and Carquinez Strait). The brief analysis of the four alternatives in the PFR indicate that both Delta disposal alternatives would be very difficult and costly to implement due to high permitting complexity, public concern, and environmental impacts. The preferred alternative identified in the PFR is that involving disposal of the agricultural drainage in-Valley, with the use of on-farm and in-district actions to reduce runoff, incorporating regional reuse, reverse osmosis, and selenium biotreatment, evaporation ponds, and mitigation habitat areas.

In 1995 the Delta Protection Commission adopted Resolution 95-3, resolving to take positions on the various options addressing the disposal of agricultural drainage from the San Luis Unit, with the intent of ensuring maintained or enhanced water quality in the Delta. Per this resolution, Commission staff issued a letter to the Bureau of Reclamation in February 2002, stating that the preferred alternative of in-Valley disposal appears to conform to the Commission's goals of maintaining or enhancing Delta water quality.

At a recent scoping meeting in Sacramento, several attendees noted that in addition to the four alternatives described in the PFR, a pure land retirement alternative should be considered, in light of recent developments involving the fee title purchase of approximately 33,000 acres in the San Luis Unit as a settlement to the lawsuit *Sumner Peck Ranch, Inc. et al. v. Bureau of Reclamation, et al.* Although the Commission never took a position on this option specifically, the letter intimated that such an alternative could provide substantial cost savings in a one-time land acquisition cost, with long-term water quality benefits to the Delta overall from the reduced runoff from those lands.

The Commission will receive an update on the San Luis Drain at its March meeting, and staff will be requesting input from the Commission in order to recommend a formal position when the environmental document for this project is released in the future.

Delta Sector Has New Park Superintendent

There is a new Park Superintendent for the Department of Parks and Recreation's (DPR) Delta Sector, covering Brannan Island and Franks Tract State Recreation Areas and Delta Meadows River Park. **Jay Galloway**, who has worked in various positions within DPR over the last twenty-five years, was promoted to the Park Superintendent Delta Sector position on January 31, 2003.

In addition to positions at Sutter's Fort State Historic Park, the California State Indian and Railroad Museums, and Angel Island and Mount Tamalpais State Parks, Mr. Galloway held a position as a field level ranger at Brannan Island State Recreation Area from 1995 to 1998. He also served as an assistant to Delta Protection Commissioner Ron Brean, at that time the District Superintendent for the Gold Rush District, as a Park and Recreation Specialist in 1998 and 1999.

Mr. Galloway obtained his Bachelor of Science in Zoology from U.C. Davis in 1973, and his Master of Science in Recreation Resource Management in 1981. His hobbies include fly fishing, skiing, bicycling, and photography. He currently lives in Dixon with his wife Suzanne, daughter Jenny, and son Matt.

The Delta Protection Commission congratulates Mr. Galloway on his new position, and looks forward to working with him on Delta recreation issues in the future!

Agricultural Discharge Waiver Update: New Regional Board Process

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) had issued a 20-year waiver for agricultural discharges during a flood event, which expired December 31, 2002. Lawsuits were filed over the Regional Board's proposal to extend that waiver in 2002, and as a result, the Regional Board adopted a two-year waiver extension and included a "watershed approach" to the problem, mandating that all agricultural landowners will need to either be included in a regional program for water quality monitoring, or take on this monitoring individually at their own expense. Landowners must declare whether they'll be joining a regional monitoring group or moving forward individually by June 2003, when regional or watershed reports on water quality monitoring and management practices are due to the Regional Board; actual water quality monitoring plans must be submitted to the Regional Board by June 2004.

After the extended agricultural discharge waiver expires on December 31, 2004, any landowners whose discharge is found to be in violation of water quality standards will not be allowed to discharge if they have not declared their involvement in a regional water quality monitoring program which would cumulatively address the pollution problem. In an attempt to make sure that Delta farmers are aware of this new requirement, so that they are not unduly burdened by having to take on these responsibilities individually, local groups are trying to determine how best to proceed. The Dixon Resource Conservation District is preparing to spearhead an effort to create a watershed group for the lower portion of the Yolo Bypass in Solano County, and the Yolo County Farm Bureau is also considering establishing a watershed group to tackle this new requirement. The two entities plan on working together to avoid duplication of efforts. Meanwhile Ducks Unlimited, which has been working primarily in the Sacramento Valley to date, has offered its assistance to the North, South, and Central Delta Water Agencies in coming up with a regional water quality monitoring program for the Delta area along with funding to carry out the required programs; these discussions are in the preliminary stages.

Commission Welcomes New Staff and Commissioner

Delta Protection Commission staff is pleased to announce that it has filled the Staff Services Analyst position vacated by Karen Morais in her retirement. **Sheila Singleton**, formerly a Junior Staff Analyst with the CA Technology, Trade and Commerce Agency's Office of Military Base Retention and Reuse, has been hired to the Commission's full-time Staff Services Analyst position in its Walnut Grove office.

Ms Singleton has worked at the California Technology, Trade and Commerce Agency since 1995 performing various duties as a Junior Staff Analyst and as an Executive Assistant in the agency's Economic Development Division. Prior to her service at that agency, she worked for five years as a Secretary at the State Board of Education. She resides in Elk Grove.

Ms Singleton is very excited about working for the Commission, and will begin her new position on Monday, March 17. She will be in attendance at the Commission's March 27 meeting. Let's all make her feel welcome!

The Commission would also like to extend a warm welcome to **Kathy Kelly**, who was appointed by Department of Water Resources (DWR) Director Tom Hannigan to replace Commissioner Steve Macaulay, who is retiring from State service to become the Executive Director of California Urban Water Agencies.

Ms Kelly is a top water policy leader in DWR, and the head of the Bay-Delta office, which includes the Delta Levees and Conveyance programs. The Commission recognizes her expertise in Delta policy issues, and looks forward to her contribution to the Commission!

18th Annual Stockton Asparagus Festival to be held April 25-27

Stockton is gearing up for the increasingly popular Stockton Asparagus Festival, always held the last weekend in April at Oak Grove Regional Park (at I-5 and Eight Mile Road). This three-day festival celebrates San Joaquin County's most prestigious agricultural product with a variety of events including: exhibits by growers, food purveyors and merchandise vendors; celebrity chef cooking demonstrations; handmade craft shows and vendors; live music and comedy entertainment on three stages; and a children's area including the "Got Milk Gravity Tour", amusements, games, and rides.

Of course, "Asparagus Alley" will be serving its popular deep-fried asparagus and other delicious asparagus dishes, and the "Spear-Its of the Valley" wine and beer pavilion will be the place to purchase commemorative 2003 Asparagus Festival tin beer mugs and sample the best in local wines and spirits.

This year's festivities include a classic car show over the three-day event. Also, those who register for the "Great Spear-It Run" through downtown Stockton the Saturday before the festival (April 19) will receive a free admission ticket to the Asparagus Festival the following weekend.

Admission to the festival is \$8 for adults, \$5 for seniors and teens ages 13-17, and free for children 12 and under. Tickets sold at the gate or in advance at the Greater Stockton Chamber of Commerce, (209) 547-2770.

For more information on this year's Asparagus Festival and associated activities, go to the festival website: www.asparagusfest.com.

Promoting the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta's agricultural, recreational, and wildlife values since 1993.

Delta Protection Commission
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